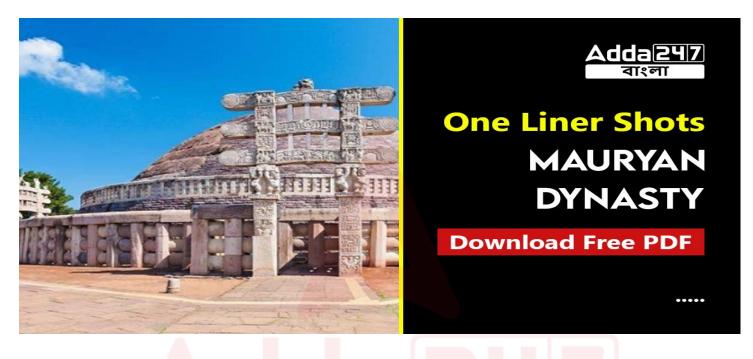


One Liner Shots (Mauryan Dynasty)



Information About the Mauryan Dynasty

Chandragupta Maurya (324/321 - 297 BC)

- → Chandragupta founded **the Mauryan Dynasty** under the mentorship of **Chanakya**.
- → Chandragupta was mentioned in various texts such as Mudrarakshas, Arthasastra and Justin's Epitome.
- → Greek accounts mention him as **Sandrokottos**.
- → Chandragupta's origins are not clearly known. The Greek sources (which are the oldest) mention him to be of non-warrior lineage.
- → The Hindu Purans mentioned that he was probably born to a Shudra woman.
- → Most Buddhist sources describe Chandragupta as a Kshatriya.
- → Chandragupta Maurya was called the **First Historical Emperor of India**.
- → Chanakya or Kautilya provided the strategy, and in a series of battles, Chandragupta defeated Dhanananda and laid the foundations of the Maurya Empire in about 321 BC.

- → In 305 BC, the Battle of Liberation took place between Chandragupta and Seleucus Nicator, in which Chandragupta acquired Baluchistan, eastern Afghanistan and a few regions in west Indus. He also married Seleucus Nicator's daughter, Helena.
- → The Greek ambassador at Chandragupta's court was Megasthenes (sent by Selucas), who wrote Indica.
- → Chandragupta brought almost the entire India except for Kalinga and a few places in the extreme South under one control.
- → Chandragupta was a follower of **Jainism**.
- → As per Jain tradition, he went to Shravana Belagola with Bhadrabahu and was said to have starved himself to death (Sallekhana).

Note: Chanakya

- Chanakya was the teacher of Chandragupta Maurya and later assisted Chandragupta as a Chief Minister.
- His other names were **Vishnugupta** and Kautilya.
- Chanakya authored 'Arthashastra', which is said to be the first political text in India.
- He is also known as **'Indian Machiavelli**".

Bindusara (324/321 - 297 BC)

- → He was the son of Chandragupta.
- → He was also called **Amitraghata**, which means 'Slayer of enemies.
- → Greek writers addressed him as Amitrochates.
- → **Deimachus** was a Greek ambassador at Bindusara's court, as Strabo mentioned.
- → He was a patron of the **Ajivika sect** and donated the Barabar cave to Ajivikas.
- → The Mauryan Empire was expanded to Karnataka as well under his rule.
- → Bindusara conquered the land between two seas.
- → He also had diplomatic relations with Western rulers.

Ashoka (269 - 232 BC)

- → He was the most popular Mauryan ruler and the **greatest king of all time**.
- → Ashoka was appointed as a viceroy of Ujjain and Taxila during Bindusara's reign.
- → The formal coronation of Ashoka took place in **269 BC**.

- → He was the first king who maintained contact through his inscriptions.
- → Kalinga War was held in 261 BC. The 13th Major Rock Edict of Ashoka depicts the war.
- → Ashoka was converted to Buddhism in 260 BC by Upagupta.
- → Being a great proponent of Buddhism, he sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitta to preach Buddhism in Sri Lanka.
- → His title was **Dharmashoka**, **Devanampriya** and **Priyadarshi**.
- → The 3rd Buddhist Council was organized during his rule at **Pataliputra**.
- → Ashoka introduced **Dhamma** and appointed *Dharma Mahamtta* to propagate Dhamma in various social groups.

<u> Mauryan <mark>Empire</mark>: Decline</u>

Some important reasons are:

- Ashoka's patronage of Buddhism and the ban on animal slaughter policy affected Brahmins. It eventually led to the development of antipathy against Ashoka.
- There needed to be more than agrarian revenue to run a huge empire.
- Oppressive rules in some Mauryan provinces.
- Financial crisis to maintain a larger army as well as bureaucracy.
- Weak successors after Ashoka failed to maintain such a large centralized empire.
- The last Mauryan ruler, Brihadratha, was assassinated by his Chief Commander, Pushyamitra Sunga, followed by establishing Sunga Dynasty in Magadha.